



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 4
ATLANTA FEDERAL CENTER
61 FORSYTH STREET
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303-8960

NOV 29 2016

Mr. Marcus Beard
District Ranger
U.S. Forest Service
57 Taff Drive
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Beasley Pond Analysis Area, Apalachicola National Forest, Liberty County, Florida. CEQ No. 20160237. ERP No. AFS-E65099-FL.

Dear Mr. Beard:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reviewed the subject document pursuant to its Clean Air Act (CAA) Section 309 responsibilities to review and comment in writing on all federal agency prepared EISs consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Section 102(2)(C). The U.S. Forest Service proposes silvicultural treatments on approximately 3,700 acres of national forestland within the Apalachicola National Forest.

These planned treatments addressed in the FEIS include 2,068 acres of pine thinnings, 833 acres of uneven-aged stand management cuts, 811 acres of wet savanna restoration with herbicide spot treatments, woody species control, 16 acres of borrow pit excavation, and 14.7 miles of road improvements. The EPA notes the FEIS's information regarding: 1) Gregory Mill Creek delisting from the Clean Water Act's impaired water's list; 2) isolated wetlands will be excluded from harvest by boundary paint; and 3) leaks and spills protocol will be incorporated into timber sale contracts. Because it was unclear from the FEIS response to comments whether this recommendation had been addressed, we continue to encourage all logging trucks should be free from tire mud and debris in the event of a heavy rain event during timber harvesting. From our review of the FEIS, the EPA has not identified any significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

We request a copy of the Record of Decision (ROD) for our administrative record when it becomes available. Should you have any questions, please contact Ms. Beth Walls of my staff at 404-562-8309 or walls.beth@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Christopher A. Militscher
Chief, NEPA Program Office
Resource Conservation and Restoration Division